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Security Council

Fiftieth Year

Provisional

3521st Meeting

Wednesday, 19 April 1995, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Kovanda	(Czech Republic)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cárdenas
	Botswana	Mr. Legwaila
	China	Mr. Wang Xuexian
	France	Mr. Mérimée
	Germany	Mr. Graf Zu Rantzau
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wisnumurti
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Nigeria	Mr. Gambari
	Oman	Mr. Al-Khussaiby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Rwanda	Mr. Bakuramutsa
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

95-85321 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The President (*interpretation from French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a place at the Council table.

The President (*interpretation from French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1995/311, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France.

The first speaker is the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, on whom I now call.

Mr. Misić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Allow me, Mr. President, to extend to you my sincere congratulations on the able manner in which you have been conducting the work of the Security Council this month. I should also like to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Li Zhaoxing, Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China, on his able stewardship of the Council last month.

At the outset of this statement, I should like to express our deepest sympathy to the delegation and Government of France and to the families of the two valiant and honourable members of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) whose valuable lives were cut short at such an early age by the merciless and cold-blooded actions of professional killers, whoever they may be.

My Government strongly rejects all the methods that the murderers of innocent members of UNPROFOR and of Bosnian civilians — men, women, children and the elderly — have been using for more than three years.

In this situation — which could potentially uncover the nature of the war in Bosnia and clearly draw a line between the aggressor and the victim — my Government is exposed to an unacceptable formula that recently has been widely employed in delicate situations. It gives its assurance that there is no basis to believe that any Bosnian soldier was involved in the recent tragic events.

Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that this tragic incident must not be used for ethically unacceptable and inappropriate political manipulations that espouse the myth that all the sides in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be seen in the same criminal light and as having the same responsibility for the evil that has engulfed my country for more than three years.

Instead, this tragic occasion should be utilized as a turning point. Continuing to appease the aggressor side for the purpose of obtaining its cooperation and achieving even meagre success in a paralysed peace process can only pull us away from peace — a fact that has been confirmed many times throughout these years.

The truth, no matter what it could be and what its price might be, must be given priority over half-truths or complete lies. The truth must finally be faced.

Too high a price has already been paid, because for too long high-ranking officials, both within and outside the United Nations, denied the existence of concentration camps; because mass rapes and "ethnic cleansing" were not recognized and denounced in time; because the appeasers went so far as to use libel in spreading the morally corrupt fallacy that the army of Bosnia and Herzegovina could possibly have staged the massacres in the bread line or in the marketplace in Sarajevo. Each time, after such suspicions had been expressed loudly and clearly, the issue was resolved, as a rule, by a magic formula stating that it was not possible to determine who had fired the deadly grenades or shots. This sounds really absurd and it is very discouraging; but, beyond all that, it is totally damaging to the credibility of UNPROFOR and especially to its effectiveness, as well as to the prospects of the peace process.

The death of two innocent soldiers who were trying to prevent deadly sniper fire by erecting sniper barricades testifies to the continuing terrorization of Sarajevo; and to the fact that resolutions on safe areas continue to be routinely violated and that there are those who continue to violate the cease-fire and the cessation of hostilities. The soldiers' deaths will not be in vain if they contribute to a change in the situation. This draft resolution is a first step in that direction. We support the intention to establish new measures, on an urgent basis, that would prevent further attacks against UNPROFOR troops and contribute to the improvement of their security.

The Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina will sincerely cooperate in these efforts and will offer its assistance and support. We would also like to believe that they will logically lead to a review of the current state of the UNPROFOR mandate, which appears reduced and deformed in comparison to its definition and to the provisions envisaged in the resolutions of the Security Council. That is why we believe that this body will, in the time frame and the manner envisaged by Security Council resolution 982 (1995), give its full attention to this question, which is essential to the future of the peace mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as to the peace process as a whole. Departures from and self-serving interpretations of Security Council resolutions on the ground have not been followed up by adequate and timely reactions from this Chamber. There is not much time left to correct this situation and to make the necessary shift.

The President of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, His Excellency Mr. Alija Izetbegovic, has recently stated the position of our Government. We understand the calls for an extension of the cease-fire, but we cannot take on such an obligation without guarantees that it will not become a time frame from which only the aggressor can benefit.

We agree that it is high time the peace process moved forward. For our part, we have made the contributions that were expected of us. We accepted, almost 10 months ago, the Contact Group plan that Karadzic continues to reject up to the present moment. The fact of our acceptance seems to be neglected, more often than not, and the fact of Karadzic's refusal seems to be veiled by some countries. In this game, the decision of the Contact Group to give support to the party that does accept the plan and punish the one that rejects it seems finally to have been totally forgotten. Does this all possibly mean a gradual introduction of a new variant of a peace settlement? If that is what is envisaged, the message of my Government should be clear: there will be no more concessions from our side. In making concessions and sacrifices for the sake of peace, we have reached the edge of the abyss; any further step would mean a definite fall into that abyss for the victim and a cynical reward for the aggressor. Any step or intention in this direction would be terminal and would only encourage the aggression to continue. We strongly believe that no one has a right to do this.

With the death of the brave soldiers of the French peace contingent, attacks on the Bihac region continue, as does the terrorizing of the safe area of Tuzla and its surroundings. The strangulation of Sarajevo has tightened, denying to officials of Bosnia and Herzegovina and even to the United States Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina the right to travel on United Nations planes. The murder and wounding of civilians continue as well.

In another wave of "ethnic cleansing", more than 150 Muslims from Bijeljina and 400 Muslims and Croats from the Banja Luka region have recently been expelled. Karadzic's followers persist in this practice, which all of us had believed had vanished with the defeat of fascism in Europe.

Unfortunately, fascism was long ago revived, and it has now advanced in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, in particular the part under the control of Karadzic's Serbs.

As we prepare for the fiftieth anniversary of the great victory of mankind over fascism, it is not excessive to suggest that the best way to commemorate that victory and pay tribute to the millions of victims of fascism would be to defeat these new practitioners of the revived fascism and disable them for ever.

The President (*interpretation from French*): I thank the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the kind words he addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): At the outset, my delegation would like to express its deep condolences for the recent terrible loss of the two French soldiers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. My delegation would also like to express its appreciation to the French delegation for its endeavours in initiating the draft resolution now before us expressing the Council's concern regarding the recent developments in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Indonesian delegation is deeply concerned by the continuing fighting in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in violation of the agreements of 23 and 31 December 1994 on a cease-fire and the complete cessation of hostilities, reflecting an overall deterioration in the situation in that country. The cessation of hostilities is indispensable if political dialogue is to have any prospect of success. Indonesia not only urges the parties to adhere to the current agreements, but would also like to encourage them to work towards their possible extension.

In particular, my delegation would like to express its grave concern about the recent attacks on personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), and urges all parties to refrain from any similar action. Only a few days ago, the President of the Security Council issued a statement denouncing such acts, specifically, the deliberate targeting and shooting to death of a French soldier by an unidentified sniper in Sarajevo, continuing the recent killing of United Nations soldiers in similar circumstances. In fact, soon after the adoption of the Presidential statement, we learned of a repetition of this cowardly act which took the life of another French soldier.

With the resolution before us today, the Council re-emphasizes its strong condemnation of the intentional targeting of UNPROFOR. The international community cannot accept any attacks of this nature on members of United Nations peace-keeping forces, and the status of United Nations personnel must be respected in all circumstances by all parties.

In this context, we underline the call on the Secretary-General to submit a proposal on measures to prevent future attacks. My delegation attaches great urgency to addressing this matter without delay, and we should like to re-emphasize the responsibility of the parties concerned to provide for the security and safety of all United Nations personnel.

Also, we emphasize the importance of the principle of the unacceptability of any attempt to resolve the conflict by military means, which principle is reflected in the draft resolution, and the draft resolution's emphasis on reaching a peaceful settlement. In this regard, we urge all parties not only to comply fully with the cease-fire and cessation-of-hostilities agreements, but also to show the political will necessary for the attainment of these objectives on the basis of acceptance of the Contact Group peace plan, which has been accepted by the Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My delegation still believes that a political settlement through negotiations is indeed imperative in order to re-establish comprehensive and permanent peace and security in that country and in the region as a whole.

Mr. Legwaila (Botswana): Let me at the outset express the sincere condolences of my delegation to the Government of France and, through Ambassador Mérimée, to the families of the two French soldiers killed in the alley-ways of Sarajevo this past week. The Security Council issued a Presidential statement last Friday condemning the killing of Sergeant Rals Gunther, and the response of the warmongers in Bosnia was to murder Corporal Eric Hardouin. The perpetrators of these cold-blooded murders should not be left under any illusion that they can intimidate the United Nations out of Bosnia.

It is demonstrably clear to us that there is a deliberate plan by elements of one or both of the parties in the Bosnia conflict to target the United Nations forces for attack, and this trend should be nipped in the bud before it gets out of control. It is unacceptable that the Blue Helmets of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), who left the comfort of their homes to go and help the people of Bosnia live in peace with one another, should themselves be victims of unprovoked attacks. It is imperative that the Council should institute specific measures to avoid a recurrence of similar incidents in the future.

We therefore agree with the import of operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution, which requests the Secretary-General to submit proposals on measures to be undertaken to prevent attacks on UNPROFOR and its personnel.

The general deterioration in the situation in Bosnia makes us wonder how long the international community will have to wait for the dawn of common sense in that war-ravaged country. The extraordinary ferocity of the war, the physical devastation, the deliberate massacre of civilians and the wanton indifference to human suffering

have continued unabated for three years now. All attempts at mediation have thus far foundered. Surely the parties to that conflict should by now have come to terms with the futility of a war that is proving unwinnable; they should by now have come to the realization that they can never resolve their differences through the barrel of the gun. And yet, tragically, the senseless carnage continues, with no end in sight.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I shall now put draft resolution S/1995/311 to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Botswana, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(interpretation from French):* There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 987 (1995).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Mérimée (France) *(interpretation from French):* First of all, I should like to thank the delegations that have been so kind as to express their condolences — which I shall not fail to convey — to my Government and to the families.

The Council last week adopted a statement condemning, in the strongest possible terms, the deliberate attacks on the personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), who are serving the cause of peace in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since then there has been another act of violence, yet again causing the death of one of UNPROFOR's soldiers.

These cowardly murders and totally unacceptable. They reflect a general deterioration in the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and are likely, sooner or later, to put UNPROFOR's missions there into the balance even though the Force has contributed to easing tensions and providing humanitarian assistance for the civilian populations.

This being the case, it was a matter of urgency for the Council to react by condemning these unacceptable acts against the peace-keeping forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for it to give a sign of its determination to have the status of United Nations personnel there respected to the letter. It was also essential to remind the Bosnian parties of the vital need to extend the cease-fire and cessation-of-hostilities agreements beyond 30 April next and to restart, immediately, the negotiations towards an overall settlement by accepting the Contact Group peace plan as a starting point.

France, which is the United Nations premier troop contributor, in Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular, expects a positive response from the parties, without delay, to Council's demands, and that UNPROFOR will thus be in a position once again to carry out its mandate.

Mr. Gomersall (United Kingdom): My Government condemns without reservation all attacks on the personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and shares in the grief of France at the loss of two of their valiant peace-keepers. The death of these two French soldiers last week amounts to deliberate murder. The parties concerned have a responsibility to ensure that these kinds of attacks stop, and the perpetrators of these attacks should be brought to justice.

These attacks underline the dangers which UNPROFOR and others working on the ground, such as the aid agencies and the European Community monitoring mission, face on a daily basis. UNPROFOR works to save lives in Bosnia, both by securing the delivery of humanitarian aid and by trying to contain the fighting.

My Government has consistently argued that UNPROFOR should remain as long as it is able to carry out its mandate at an acceptable level of risk. If UNPROFOR were to withdraw, the consequent escalation of the fighting would result in a humanitarian tragedy and seriously increase the risk of a wider and more terrible conflict.

Britain has been working to prevent this, and hopes that neither side in the conflict wants it either. There has to be a point at which troop contributors, including Britain, can no longer reasonably be asked to accept the sacrifices that their continued presence involves. We have not yet reached that point, but we do need to address urgently how the safety of UNPROFOR troops can be improved and how we can improve their ability to carry out their tasks. We shall consider seriously any proposals

to these ends. They will need to take into account UNPROFOR's peace-keeping, not its peace-enforcement role. We look forward to receiving the Secretary-General's report on these issues.

As in all peace-keeping operations, the only real guarantee of UNPROFOR's safety lies with the parties themselves. They must be brought to realize that war is no solution. Neither side can win a military conflict. In the end, they will have to return to the negotiating table. Meanwhile, it will again be the ordinary people of Bosnia who will suffer needlessly.

It is vital that both sides agree to extend the cessation-of-hostilities agreement and cooperate with UNPROFOR in implementing it fully. The alternative is renewed bloodshed, in which UNPROFOR's continued presence will be called into question. In that case, leaders on both sides would bear a very heavy burden of responsibility.

My Government, however, recognizes the Bosnian Government's concerns about freezing the existing confrontation lines. We agree that a cease-fire can only be, and must be, the first step towards a negotiated settlement. The Contact Group plan remains the starting point for further negotiations. We deplore the Bosnian Serbs' stubborn refusal to accept this and urge them to reconsider. We call upon the Council to continue its support for the Contact Group's efforts to take the political process forward.

Mr. Inderfurth (United States of America): My Government joins with the Council and with the Government and people of France in expressing sorrow and anger at the recent murder of two French soldiers serving as peace-keepers in Bosnia. They died, as so many have died in that tragic land, at the hands of cowardly snipers. This resolution will not bring those brave soldiers back. But it should serve to renew our resolve that the parties to the conflict in Bosnia must respect the status of United Nations personnel. It should prompt us to explore urgently the means by which UNPROFOR personnel might better defend themselves. And it should give new life to our support for an extension to the Bosnian cease-fire and cessation of hostilities that are due to expire at the end of this month.

Finally, this resolution reminds us of the valour of the thousands of men and women, of many nationalities, who are now serving the cause of international security as United Nations peace-keepers around the globe. Their tasks are difficult, perilous and, too often, thankless. They deserve the world's admiration and this Council's full support.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian):* The Russian delegation supported the unanimous resolution aimed at ensuring the safety of the personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Together with other Council members, we once again convey our condolences to France, whose citizens on this occasion have fallen victim to terrorist acts, for which there can be no justification.

Russia, which has sent its own national contingent and a significant number of military and civilian police observers to Bosnia and Herzegovina, knows very well how high is the risk to the lives and the safety of the international personnel as they carry out their peace-keeping functions in that region. The number of deaths in UNPROFOR is already close to 200, not to mention the hundreds of wounded and other victims. Unfortunately, these losses are the result not only of accidents, but also of deliberate acts by all the Bosnian parties against UNPROFOR personnel as they were carrying out their duties. Many Blue Helmets have suffered as a result of artillery, mortar and sniper fire. We expect the resolution to serve as a serious signal and warning to all who would indulge in aggressive and provocative acts against the United Nations Protection Force.

The safety of international personnel is directly affected by the overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unfortunately, the situation there continues to worsen. In a whole range of areas, there is no halt to military actions, in clear violation of the agreements of 21 and 31 December last year between the Bosnian parties on a cease-fire and on a complete cessation of hostilities. The situation is being aggravated by attempted offensives from the Government forces and by disproportionate responses from the Bosnian Serbs, including acts against the civilian population which is absolutely inadmissible. This is all leading inexorably towards an escalation in the conflict, to yet more victims and further suffering.

Another indicator of the worsening situation can be seen in the fact that recently a military helicopter reported by the Secretariat as belonging either to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Government army or to the Bosnian Croats was used to attack a Bosnian Serb position in the area of Donji Vakuf. That is the most flagrant violation of the no-fly zone since the relevant

Security Council resolution was adopted, and is indicative of the danger that air power and not just heavy ground-based weaponry will be brought into play in the Bosnian conflict.

The shelling by the Bosnian Serbs of Dubrovnik airport is also a cause for great concern, as is the earlier attack by units of the Croatian regular army and Bosnian Croat formations from the Livno area in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I need hardly mention the constant and massive violations of the arms embargo against Bosnia, which are being conducted practically in the open.

In this connection, we think it extremely important that the resolution clearly shows that the Council is convinced of the unacceptability of using military means to achieve a settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Security Council has clearly stated that violating the no-fly zone is inadmissible, that the agreements of 23 and 31 December 1994 must be strictly observed and also extended, and that the peace talks must be resumed as a matter of urgency. We are convinced that it is possible if the Contact Group plan is taken as the starting point, to achieve agreements to suit everyone on a just constitutional arrangement for Bosnia and Herzegovina that will ensure equal rights for all the peoples living there.

I should very much like to hope that the Bosnian parties will react appropriately to the Council's resolution and that they will not allow new outbreaks of large-scale war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which would have unforeseeable consequences.

Mr. Cárdenas (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: A few days ago the Security Council, with some sense of hope, adopted three resolutions that established new mandates for the United Nations presence in the former Yugoslavia. Today, on the other hand, the Council has just adopted resolution 987 (1995) because of the alarming, continuing and serious deterioration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular, and in Croatia.

The cowardly assassination of two French soldiers of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) must serve as a warning and must make us think about the future role of the United Nations in the conflict area.

We have stated before, and we will continue tirelessly to state, that if the parties do not wish to help themselves the United Nations cannot do so in their place. If this is indeed the case we must very soon consider carefully the options available to us in the future.

The Argentine Republic views the death of a United Nations soldier, whatever his nationality, in the same way and with the same sense of sorrow as it would the death of one of its own soldiers. In addition, we feel deep indignation at the cruel cowardliness with which the lives of the French soldiers were snuffed out.

The parties to the conflict must understand that such acts are inadmissible and that those responsible deserve the international community's strongest rejection and condemnation and must shoulder their responsibility in keeping with the norms of international law. We hope that this will indeed be the case.

At this time my delegation would like to express its complete solidarity with and sympathy for the French delegation as well as the members of the families and the friends of the soldiers who gave their lives while fulfilling a noble duty — so diametrically different from the assassins, who lack the most elementary morals.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): The recent cowardly murder of two French UNPROFOR soldiers in Sarajevo is for us, also, a source of profound sorrow and strong indignation. These feelings were expressed personally by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Agnelli, in her statement here in New York yesterday at the NPT Review and Extension Conference. And even as we speak a wire has just arrived from Gorazde with the news that a mine blast there has wounded three British soldiers, one of them seriously. Three more victims. We cannot but feel even greater anxiety and indignation.

Italy therefore supported with full conviction the draft resolution proposed by France.

Today's resolution underlines three closely connected questions: the security of UNPROFOR personnel, which is indispensable for the continuation of the operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the need for an extension of the agreement for a cease-fire and a cessation of hostilities — whose expiration date, we would do well to remember, is dangerously near; and, finally, the need for a restoration of the negotiation process for a comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the Bosnian crisis.

My Government has followed with extreme concern the increasing violation of the cease-fire in recent weeks.

We believe that these incidents raise dramatically the serious threat of a general return to fighting, which would of course lead to new suffering for the sorely tried Bosnian people: hence the importance, in our view, for the international community to issue a new, vigorous signal to all the Bosnian parties to convince them that there is no military solution to the present conflict and to induce all of them to respect the lives, dignity, and freedom of movement of the international forces that have thus far played, and that continue to play — at the cost of great personal sacrifice — a fundamental role in trying to bring peace and humanitarian assistance to an afflicted people.

Mr. Graf Zu Rantzau (Germany): On behalf of my Government I have today, together with all the other members of the Security Council, voted in favour of the draft resolution which the Council has adopted today.

This resolution, as we all know, was called for by the assassination of two French soldiers in the service of peace. The feelings of my delegation and of my Government are divided between profound compassion for the families of those killed and for the French Government and indescribable outrage at this act, a most heinous, most barbaric, most cowardly, most unsoldier-like and most politically senseless act: the assassination of an unsuspecting person from a safe distance and under cover.

The act is all the more despicable if it is directed against young men whose sole purpose, in the service of their country, of the United Nations and of peace, is to bring about peace, to keep peace and to save lives. An act such as this proves the utter cynicism of, and the total disregard for decency and civilized human behaviour by, those who are responsible for the act. The question must be raised whether there is really any will to come to a peaceful arrangement in this conflict-torn area.

My Government's respect goes to those Governments that, in spite of the dangers that have been demonstrated on more than one occasion, still maintain the presence of their United Nations peace-keeping troops in the area.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.